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roadSIGNS Newsletter

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April 2015

Greetings!

March began with a plan to take a week off. It is interesting to notice that if you do not fully book days of in your agenda, the days get filled. Lesson learned! Despite poor planning however, Jim and I did enjoy a one day break in Old Montreal at Bota Bota Spa. This was an amazing experience and left us feeling refreshed and relaxed. At the end of March, we also travelled to Cold Spring, New York, to visit with friends Lynn and Norm. Not only did we enjoy relaxing with them, we attended two amazing concerts: James Galway and Celtic Women.

The remainder of our days was filled with coaching clients, two speaking engagements for PCMA (Professional Conference Managers Association) in Ottawa

and Toronto, and launching a new project for one of our clients.

In a series of apparently random conversations with family, friends and clients, a theme emerged regarding the challenges facing teens/young adults in choosing their future and how, as parents to support them. We heard stories of kids suffering depressions and anxiety, labels of learning disabilities, kids sitting at home without employment following high school graduation and more. And we heard the frustration in the voices of the parents as they wondered how to manage these challenging circumstances and how to manage themselves and their hopes and dreams for their children.

Welcome to **Being There**, a summary of the ideas generated from our conversations with parents and which we believe is applicable whether you have children or not. It is really all about relationships.

Enjoy the read!

Betty

In collaboration with the Quirky Carrot, our favorite local restaurant/coffee house located in Alexandria, the **Healthy Living Café** will be held the second Tuesday of every month from 7-9 p.m. In April we welcome Amanda Marini-Rohde to the Healthy Living Café! Amanda is a dancer, energy worker and teacher. On Tuesday, April 14th join us for Amanda's presentation 'Body Awareness'.

For details and to register, click [HERE](#)

Our next Retreat Day will be April 25th and 26th for the two day **ME FIRST Retreat**.

There are only 10 spaces available.

For details click [HERE](#)

In This Issue

[This month's Sign](#)

[Your aSIGNment](#)

[Travel Tips](#)

[Someone in Your Corner](#)

[Upcoming Events](#)



"The Seed of Life" (24" X 12") Painting by Betty Healey
Summer 2014

April Newsletter

"As long as the roots are not severed, all is well.
And all will be well in the garden"

Chance the Gardener in the movie 'Being There'

BEING THERE

As I reflected on a title for this month's e-newsletter, the words 'being there' crept in. The words struck a chord of familiarity and then I remembered it was the title of a 1979 movie starring Peter Sellers. In his final movie performance Sellers played Chance the Gardener, an unassuming character who had always led a simple life away from the responsibilities and expectations of what we might consider normal. Whether by happenstance or fate he is thrust into a role as a trusty advisor for a powerful business man and an insider in Washington politics.

What has this got to do with my sense of 'being there'? Like Sellers role, I have been an unassuming observer in many aspects of life. One of these is parenting. Despite this I have recently found myself thrust into a position of actively observing and being present to a number of parents who have been asking for advice regarding their teenage and young adult children. The theme is a common one - these child-adults are lost. They are searching for a greater sense of meaning and failing to find the answers they are

searching for. The parents are asking for ways and means of supporting them. My best advice has been to 'be there', be present and intentional, and in Chance the Gardener's words, to keep the roots intact. It is roots that creates wings.

Life is a state of mind. (Being There)

More specifically, Jim and I with our clients are suggesting the following strategies:

Ask for Help

Being lost is an isolating experience regardless of age. As a parent of a teenager or young adult who is in the struggle of finding their unique place in the world, the burden falls on you to support, cajole, encourage, and perhaps even scold. My best advice to you is to reach out and ask for help, whether this is through a support group or network and through personal coaching for yourself. Notice how your child's experiences mirror your own. You may need to lead the way by being there for yourself first before you can really help s your child.

Support and Challenge

I hear the frustration in the voices of my clients. Frustration leads to anger, making demands, pushing and prodding, usually with little result other than pushback from the teenager.

Conversely, some parents we see dislike conflict and fear that challenging their child will push them away. They assume the supporters role. This usually fails as a strategy as it simply creates comfort for the child-adult with little or no action or forward movement.

The preferred strategy lies in the middle - support them by being present, recognizing who they are, seeing their gifts and strengths. This is not the time to be a critic. Do challenge however. Be clear on your expectations and your boundaries. If they are hesitating to make any choices, expect them to make a choice - to work, to contribute to the household income and maintenance, to take the first step.

Identifying Strengths

As with many things in life, parents and teachers often focus on what a child, teen or young adult is not doing well rather than identifying what they excel at. Spend time with your child helping them identify what they enjoy, what they have learned that excites them, what they are curious about. Point out to them what you see. Share feedback from others. Emphasize their abilities, strengths and successes.

If you or your child is having difficulty identifying strengths, offer them some assessment

tools. Two I recommend are Strengths Finder and Lumina Spark. (Ask us for details).

Curiosity and Exploration

One of the complaints I have heard recently from parents is that their teen had graduated high school and is now sitting idle in their parent's home, occupied with Video Games, and other time wasters. The reason given: "I don't know what my passion is so I have no idea what to do next."

The passion excuse can become the great cop-out. There is an underlying idea that one day the passion light bulb will suddenly come on and then they will know what it is they want to do/be in life. This is a dangerous game to play with your young adult and this is where your boundaries and stated expectations become paramount.

Passion rarely appears as that light bulb moment; it needs to be cultivated. That happens by getting engaged in different activities and exercising curiosity. You can walk down a few wrong paths during the search. These paths simply provide information regarding what is less than perfect and opportunities to clarify what is perfect.

Be present to this with your child and encourage both exploration and curiosity even if this means taking a minimum wage position at a Tim Hortons or local retail store.

Conscious Awareness of Your Story

I have noticed that in their concern for the future of their children, parents have begun to form their own story regarding their child's future. It might go something like this, "I am worried that Ben will not find anything that really interests him. He is disconnected. Now that many of his friends have gone to college, he is sitting at home by himself and he has no plans."

While all of this may be true it is not helping Ben's future. Worry is also an intention and in your own way, you are co-creating this future for your child. As challenging as this may seem, write the story you want for them. It might look like, "I can see Benn thriving, and finding his place in the world. He is employed and this will lead him to the perfect position in the future".

Can you sense the shift in energy? If you can hold an uplifting forward moving intention for your child, you become part of the solution in helping them find their way.

The Age of Maturity

I sometimes hesitate to share this with parents. If you are not aware, the age of maturity is now age 24-26. Despite the fact that children are maturing physically at younger

ages, psychologically they are not. The age of maturity is the time during which the frontal lobe of the brain fully develops. This development is necessary for the individual to fully appreciate and identify their place in the world and to understand the full impact of their behaviors on the world around them.

I am not suggesting that this becomes a global excuse for being irresponsible. It simple occurs to me that we as a society are expecting 18 year olds to make educational/career decisions regarding their future when they are not psychologically equipped to do so.

Final Word

As I have learned in life, whatever I want to change, shift or influence in situations or others, begins with me first. And so it is with your children. Your ability to be present to your state of mind and how you are showing up influences your ability to be present for others.

Always remember that whatever challenges you may be facing with your children, either teens or young adults, you are not alone. Reach out to others, ask for help. Be informed. Be loving and be tough, clear on your boundaries and expectations. See your children's strengths and highlight them; encourage them to build on these important building blocks. Be intentional in creating your story regarding their future - turn worry into an uplifting vision.

Your asSIGNment

It may be that this e-newsletter appears to have little relevance to you, as you may not have a teenager or young adult in your life. Being there , however, applies to all relationships. I invite you to identify the gems that apply to the relationships in your life and to notice which relationships are calling for your attention.

Travel Tip

Some say that we chose our parents just as our children have chosen us. Travel with this question: why have my children chosen me?

Conscious Communication Coaching

Conscious communication is mindfulness. Our coaching clients are experiencing amazing results in their life as they learn to be clear about what they want and to take action in doing and being.

roadSIGNS is dedicated to offering coaching packages and retreat programs based on the principles of Conscious Communication and designed to assist you in living the life of your choice.

Here is what two of our coaching circle participants shared with us recently:

... the nuggets of wisdom that have revealed themselves throughout our short and powerful six weeks (of coaching) will continue to unveil themselves to me and lead to new questions and discoveries.

...The coaching sessions in FROM CRITIC TO COACH have helped me discover how to return to pure energy, to experience the true meaning and purpose of the game I call Life.

Give yourself the gift of coaching. [Contact us](#) to arrange a coaching consultation and explore the options.

Lumina Learning Systems

Learn about your personal preferences and your core qualities/strengths through the Lumina Spark Portrait. This comprehensive psychosocial assessment leads you gently down the path of self-discovery through a unique portrait of who you are and how you show up in different life situations. It is a great starting point in developing your awareness and learning strategies for being resilient.

**I have always wanted to learn to mother myself first
but I did not know how to do it.**

**Lumina has given me the tools to understand
what it is I need to do for myself and how to engage my strengths.**

It has opened the door to being coached through my top qualities/strengths.

Monica

Check out the website, www.roadsigns.ca for more information and/or contact betty@roadSIGNS.ca .

Events:

For details regarding any of our upcoming events in 2014 [visit our website](#)

ME FIRST Self-Study Program (New offering)

The ME FIRST Self-Study Program offers a structured approach for your ME FIRST experience. This 10 module self-study program replicates the ME FIRST Retreat experience allowing you to complete it at your own pace

For more details go [HERE](#)

Healthy Living Cafe

roadSIGNS is joining forces with the amazing staff at the Quirky Carrot in Alexandria, ON for a monthly presentation and information session called **Healthy Living Café**. We will be featuring speakers and discussions that will offer you tips to living a healthier life - Body Mind and Spirit. The next **Healthy Living Café** will take place on Tuesday April 14th and will be held every 2nd Tuesday of each month.

To register and/or find out more, click [HERE](#)

ME FIRST 2-Day Retreat

Join us for the next ME FIRST 2 Day Retreat on Saturday April 25th and Sunday April 26th, 2015.

The event is filling up fast so don't delay.

For more details go [HERE](#)

Your comments and suggestions on this newsletter are greatly appreciated. Forward this e-mail to a friend or colleague who you think would appreciate the message. A simple way is to use the "forward e-mail" button below my signature.

If you would like to sign up for my monthly e-mail, please follow this link <http://www.roadsigns.ca/newsletters.html>

Sincerely,

